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THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART FEATURES FREE SERIES OF JAPANESE FILMS

Realism in the Japanese Film, a series of sixteen Japanese feature films, is one of many free activities planned in conjunction with Reflections of Reality in Japanese Art, a major loan exhibition organized by Sherman E. Lee, director of The Cleveland Museum of Art. The feature films have been chosen by Dr. Lee and Edward B. Henning, chief curator of modern art, to explore the concept of realism in the Japanese cinema. The series begins on Wednesday, February 16, and extends through Wednesday, May 25, with most films showing on Wednesday evenings or Saturday afternoons. A detailed listing of dates, times and titles is attached. All films are free.

Lectures by film critics Donald Richie and Audie E. Bock complement the series. Mr. Richie will speak Sunday, April 10, at 4:00 pm on Realism in the Japanese Film. Ms. Bock's lecture, entitled Beauty Isn't Always Pretty--The Films of Mikio Naruse, will take place on Wednesday, April 20, at 7:00 pm. Naruse's film, Floating Clouds, will follow her lecture. The film series and supporting lectures are made possible in part by a grant from the Japan-United States Friendship Commission.

The series Realism in the Japanese Film introduces films by Japan's finest directors, some of whom are not well known in the West: Kon Ichikawa, Teinosuki Kinugasa, Akira Kurosawa, Kenji Mizoguchi, Mikio Naruse, Yasujiro Ozu, Kaneta Shindo, and Shiro Toyoda. Akira Kurosawa is the Japanese director perhaps best

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known to Western audiences, yet many Japanese critics consider him the least Japanese of their film directors. Vigorous, artful, and dramatic, his films include Rashomon, Ikiru, Throne of Blood, and Dersu Uzala, all to be shown in this series.

Kenji Mizoguchi and Yasujiro Ozu share the reputation of being the most Japanese of directors, Mizoguchi largely for the visual aesthetics of his films and Ozu for his understated, slowly paced stories. Mizoguchi, whose stories are usually about women in a changing world, is represented by Sisters of the Gion, The Life of O-Haru, and Tales of the Taira Clan. Ozu concentrates on stories of the disintegration of the traditional Japanese family, with The Flavor of Green Tea Over Rice, Tokyo Story, and An Autumn Afternoon.

Known as an actor's director, Shiro Toyoda obtains exceptional performances from small, carefully chosen casts in films like A Cat, Two Women, and One Man. Mikio Naruse's films about the break-up of marriage--Sounds from the Mountains and Floating Clouds are being shown here--have made him well known to serious filmgoers in France. Unlike Naruse, Kon Ichikawa treats diverse themes, but a dark, heavy texture and dry, black wit are his signature in all his films, including Odd Obsession. Kaneta Shindo, one of the most original Japanese directors to appear during the 1960s, is represented by The Island, a story told entirely visually. The series begins with the earliest of the films chosen; A Page of Madness (1926) by Teinosuki Kinugasa is comparable in inventiveness and technical daring to the work of Sergei Eisenstein, the great Russian director with whom Kinugasa studied.

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For additional information or photographs, please contact the Public Information Office, The Cleveland Museum of Art, 11150 East Boulevard, Cleveland, Ohio 44106; 216/421-7340.